



Australian Bureau of Statistics

CATALOGUE NO. 6321.0

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INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES, AUSTRALIA, JANUARY 1989

PHONE INQUIRIES

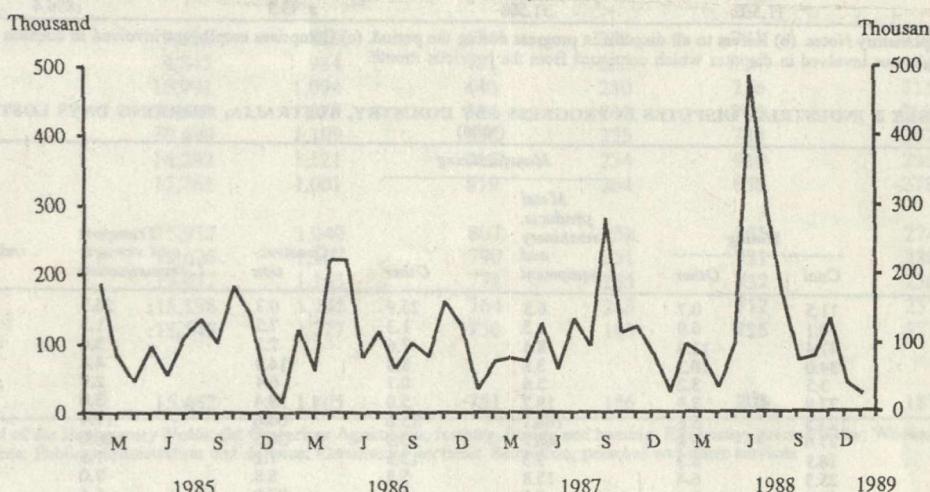
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ELECTRONIC SERVICES

This publication contains for the first time details of the cause of disputes, their duration and method of settlement at the national level.

WORKING DAYS LOST, AUSTRALIA



In January 1989—

- 25,800 working days were lost as a result of disputes in progress, the lowest number of working days lost in any month since January 1986 (15,200).
- 105 disputes were recorded, involving 27,000 employees.
- The Transport and storage; Communication industry grouping recorded 22.1% (5,700) of all working days lost while the Coal mining industry recorded 21.0% (5,400), the lowest number of working days lost in that industry since April 1988 (3,500).

In the 12 months ended January 1989—

- 267 working days were lost per thousand employees as the result of disputes in progress, compared with 221 for the 12 months ending January 1988.
- 1,528 disputes were reported as being in progress, involving 920,600 employees and the loss of 1,637,900 working days.
- 1,518 disputes were reported as having ended during this period, involving 915,100 employees and the loss of 1,715,700 working days.
- Of these 1,518 disputes, Managerial policy was reported as the major cause, accounting for 38.9% (591) of disputes, involving 311,900 employees and the loss of 895,000 working days.
- 954 disputes (62.8%) were of 1 day's duration or less.
- 841 disputes, representing 55.4% of all disputes ending in the period, were settled by resumption without negotiation.

NOTES

The statistics of industrial disputes are compiled mainly from data obtained from employers (both private and public sector) and trade unions concerning individual disputes, and from reports of government authorities.

The statistics relate to disputes which involved stoppages of work of ten working days or more at the establishments where the stoppages occurred.

A Glossary and Explanatory Notes are published on pages 5 to 7 of this publication.

IAN CASTLES
Australian Statistician

TABLE 1. INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES IN PROGRESS : AUSTRALIA

| Period | | Number of disputes(a) | | Employees involved ('000) | | Working days lost ('000) |
|-----------------------------|-----------|-----------------------|----------|------------------------------|----------|-----------------------------|
| | | Commenced in period | Total(b) | Newly involved(c) | Total(b) | |
| 1987 | December | 96 | 115 | 34.8 | 49.7 | 86.5 |
| 1988 | January | 81 | 86 | 12.2 | 12.6 | 29.2 |
| | February | 139 | 149 | 44.0 | 58.1 | 100.5 |
| | March | 168 | 187 | 34.7 | 41.9 | 84.8 |
| | April | 100 | 108 | 19.8 | 21.2 | 36.6 |
| | May | 147 | 159 | 57.4 | 68.5 | 101.0 |
| | June | 165 | 186 | 364.0 | 374.5 | 488.3 |
| | July | 91 | 107 | 117.5 | 192.8 | 297.8 |
| | August | 142 | 151 | 107.1 | 116.2 | 166.2 |
| | September | 109 | 121 | 33.7 | 49.7 | 76.3 |
| | October | 139 | 151 | 36.6 | 41.1 | 83.3 |
| | November | 150 | 167 | 51.8 | 59.0 | 136.1 |
| | December | 71 | 93 | 15.1 | 25.6 | 41.3 |
| 1989 | January | 96 | 105 | 24.3 | 27.0 | 25.8 |
| <i>Twelve months ended—</i> | | | | | | |
| January | 1987 | 1,761 | 1,770 | 680.5 | 696.4 | 1,409.8 |
| | 1988 | 1,502 | 1,518 | 592.7 | 608.7 | 1,306.9 |
| | 1989 | 1,517 | 1,528 | 906.0 | 920.6 | 1,637.9 |
| December | 1986 | 1,747 | 1,754 | 673.9 | 691.7 | 1,390.7 |
| | 1987 | 1,512 | 1,517 | 593.4 | 608.8 | 1,311.9 |
| | 1988 | 1,502 | 1,508 | 893.9 | 894.4 | 1,641.3 |

(a) See paragraph 5 of the Explanatory Notes. (b) Refers to all disputes in progress during the period. (c) Comprises employees involved in disputes which commenced during the month and additional employees involved in disputes which continued from the previous month.

TABLE 2. INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES IN PROGRESS : BY INDUSTRY, AUSTRALIA, WORKING DAYS LOST
('000)

| Period | Manufacturing | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------|-------|---|-------|--------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------|----------------|
| | Mining | | Metal products, machinery and equipment | Other | Construction | Transport and storage; Communication | Other industries (a) | All industries |
| | Coal | Other | | | | | | |
| 1987 | December | 11.5 | 0.7 | 6.5 | 25.9 | 0.7 | 26.5 | 14.6 |
| 1988 | January | 10.1 | 0.9 | 1.3 | 1.3 | 7.5 | 1.5 | 6.6 |
| | February | 47.4 | 11.4 | 8.4 | 7.6 | 7.2 | 3.4 | 15.1 |
| | March | 34.0 | 10.3 | 3.8 | 8.8 | 14.9 | 4.4 | 8.6 |
| | April | 3.5 | 3.2 | 3.6 | 0.7 | 6.4 | 2.9 | 16.3 |
| | May | 27.9 | 3.9 | 19.2 | 5.0 | 29.4 | 3.0 | 12.6 |
| | June | 123.5 | 5.6 | 168.1 | 15.6 | 64.6 | 17.4 | 93.4 |
| | July | 77.6 | 3.8 | 66.7 | 33.9 | 30.5 | 20.0 | 29.8 |
| | August | 18.9 | 8.3 | 9.3 | 13.5 | 7.2 | 1.8 | 107.2 |
| | September | 25.3 | 6.4 | 15.8 | 5.8 | 8.8 | 7.0 | 7.2 |
| | October | 25.1 | 7.6 | 5.1 | 3.2 | 23.9 | 5.4 | 13.0 |
| | November | 57.5 | 33.1 | 7.3 | 15.1 | 1.7 | 7.4 | 14.0 |
| | December | 20.5 | 2.8 | 0.8 | 6.8 | 5.7 | 1.0 | 3.6 |
| 1989 | January | 5.4 | 2.2 | 2.4 | 3.6 | 2.2 | 5.7 | 4.3 |
| <i>Twelve months ended—</i> | | | | | | | | |
| January | 1987 | 361.5 | 191.9 | 189.5 | 206.7 | 120.2 | 58.0 | 282.1 |
| | 1988 | 300.9 | 43.0 | 197.1 | 194.1 | 195.3 | 90.9 | 285.6 |
| | 1989 | 466.5 | 98.8 | 310.6 | 119.6 | 202.6 | 79.2 | 360.6 |
| December | 1986 | 362.0 | 179.4 | 187.4 | 205.3 | 117.7 | 57.6 | 281.4 |
| | 1987 | 291.8 | 55.7 | 199.6 | 195.5 | 194.5 | 92.5 | 282.3 |
| | 1988 | 471.2 | 97.4 | 309.5 | 117.4 | 207.9 | 75.0 | 362.9 |

(a) Comprises Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting; Electricity, gas and water; Wholesale and retail trade; Finance, property and business services; Public administration and defence; Community services; Recreation, personal and other services.

TABLE 3. INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES IN PROGRESS : STATES AND AUSTRALIA, WORKING DAYS LOST
('000)

| Period | NSW | Vic. | Qld | SA | WA | Tas. | NT | ACT | Aust. |
|-----------------------------|-----------|-------|-------|-------|------|-------|------|------|-------|
| 1987 | December | 47.6 | 26.3 | 2.8 | 2.5 | 1.1 | 5.4 | 0.2 | 0.7 |
| 1988 | January | 9.6 | 1.6 | 13.2 | 0.6 | 3.4 | 0.3 | 0.4 | 29.2 |
| | February | 62.7 | 9.5 | 7.8 | 5.3 | 12.4 | 0.9 | 1.2 | 100.5 |
| | March | 26.5 | 13.2 | 21.4 | 0.7 | 17.2 | 3.4 | 1.4 | 84.8 |
| | April | 10.7 | 13.1 | 3.3 | 1.3 | 5.3 | 1.5 | 0.2 | 36.6 |
| | May | 39.3 | 5.8 | 45.8 | 2.6 | 5.1 | 0.9 | 0.9 | 101.0 |
| | June | 269.0 | 64.7 | 94.2 | 23.4 | 24.8 | 3.5 | 1.3 | 488.3 |
| | July | 48.6 | 181.8 | 49.8 | 4.7 | 9.7 | 2.9 | — | 297.8 |
| | August | 120.5 | 21.2 | 6.8 | 4.1 | 7.3 | 3.5 | 1.7 | 166.2 |
| | September | 30.2 | 22.7 | 12.8 | 0.6 | 9.1 | 0.1 | — | 76.3 |
| | October | 31.7 | 7.4 | 11.3 | 1.1 | 30.2 | 0.8 | 0.5 | 83.3 |
| | November | 59.9 | 10.1 | 30.3 | 1.0 | 33.2 | 0.7 | 0.2 | 136.1 |
| | December | 21.3 | 11.6 | 2.8 | 1.6 | 2.9 | — | 1.1 | 41.3 |
| 1989 | January | 12.5 | 2.0 | 5.9 | 0.9 | 2.0 | 1.1 | 0.9 | 0.5 |
| <i>Twelve months ended—</i> | | | | | | | | | |
| January | 1987 | 605.8 | 380.4 | 173.6 | 46.2 | 155.9 | 28.7 | 11.6 | 7.6 |
| | 1988 | 741.7 | 279.5 | 85.6 | 44.6 | 104.3 | 27.9 | 6.8 | 16.5 |
| | 1989 | 732.9 | 363.0 | 292.2 | 47.2 | 159.1 | 19.4 | 9.3 | 14.6 |
| December | 1986 | 598.8 | 381.8 | 173.3 | 46.3 | 143.1 | 29.2 | 11.8 | 6.5 |
| | 1987 | 744.8 | 281.4 | 73.7 | 44.6 | 115.3 | 28.0 | 6.5 | 17.5 |
| | 1988 | 730.0 | 362.6 | 299.5 | 47.0 | 160.6 | 18.6 | 8.9 | 14.1 |

TABLE 4. INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES IN PROGRESS : BY INDUSTRY, AUSTRALIA, WORKING DAYS LOST PER THOUSAND EMPLOYEES(a)

| Period | Manufacturing | | | | | | | | All industries | |
|-----------------------------|---------------|-------|---|-------|--------------|--------------------------------------|-------|----------------------|----------------|--|
| | Mining | | Metal products, machinery and equipment | Other | Construction | Transport and storage; Communication | | Other industries (b) | | |
| | Coal | Other | | | | Other | Other | | | |
| <i>Twelve months ended—</i> | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1985— | | | | | | | | | | |
| December | 6,892 | 1,928 | 256 | 312 | 666 | 430 | 71 | 228 | | |
| 1986— | | | | | | | | | | |
| December | 10,741 | 3,328 | 445 | 328 | 458 | 135 | 72 | 242 | | |
| 1987— | | | | | | | | | | |
| December | 8,920 | 1,072 | 479 | 305 | 743 | 217 | 70 | 223 | | |
| 1987— | | | | | | | | | | |
| January | 10,726 | 3,598 | 451 | 330 | 467 | 135 | 72 | 245 | | |
| 1988— | | | | | | | | | | |
| January | 9,258 | 820 | 474 | 302 | 741 | 213 | 70 | 221 | | |
| February | 9,845 | 984 | 481 | 286 | 734 | 216 | 71 | 225 | | |
| March | 10,791 | 1,094 | 440 | 280 | 716 | 215 | 71 | 226 | | |
| April | 10,504 | 1,078 | 384 | 265 | 705 | 208 | 73 | 218 | | |
| May | 10,498 | 1,109 | 336 | 233 | 735 | 202 | 73 | 212 | | |
| June | 14,292 | 1,121 | 715 | 234 | 910 | 236 | 93 | 282 | | |
| July | 15,761 | 1,001 | 819 | 264 | 858 | 278 | 107 | 308 | | |
| August | 15,912 | 1,040 | 807 | 252 | 835 | 274 | 126 | 318 | | |
| September | 13,626 | 1,107 | 790 | 251 | 721 | 280 | 101 | 283 | | |
| October | 13,977 | 1,163 | 771 | 235 | 732 | 230 | 98 | 276 | | |
| November | r15,198 | 1,742 | 764 | 213 | 712 | 237 | 88 | r277 | | |
| December | r15,543 | 1,777 | 750 | 183 | 725 | 177 | 85 | r269 | | |
| 1989— | | | | | | | | | | |
| January | 15,462 | 1,805 | 751 | 186 | 702 | 187 | 84 | 267 | | |

(a) See paragraph 4 of the Explanatory Notes. (b) Comprises Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting; Electricity, gas and water; Wholesale and retail trade; Finance, property and business services; Public administration and defence; Community services; Recreation, personal and other services.

TABLE 5. INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES IN PROGRESS : STATES AND AUSTRALIA, WORKING DAYS LOST PER THOUSAND EMPLOYEES(a)

| Period | NSW | Vic. | Qld | SA | WA | Tas. | NT | ACT | Aust. |
|-----------------------------|------|------|-----|-----|-----|------|-----|-----|-------|
| <i>Twelve months ended—</i> | | | | | | | | | |
| 1985— | | | | | | | | | |
| December | 209 | 236 | 411 | 48 | 187 | 138 | 213 | 159 | 228 |
| 1986— | | | | | | | | | |
| December | 304 | 240 | 207 | 95 | 272 | 190 | 200 | 55 | 242 |
| 1987— | | | | | | | | | |
| December | 366 | 172 | 87 | 91 | 213 | 177 | 111 | 143 | 223 |
| 1987— | | | | | | | | | |
| January | 307 | 239 | 208 | 95 | 295 | 186 | 194 | 64 | 245 |
| 1988— | | | | | | | | | |
| January | 362 | 170 | 101 | 90 | 193 | 177 | 118 | 134 | 221 |
| February | 369 | 164 | 107 | 100 | 208 | 180 | 126 | 108 | 225 |
| March | 360 | 163 | 129 | 97 | 219 | 194 | 138 | 104 | 226 |
| April | 338 | 164 | 128 | 96 | 221 | 190 | 118 | 100 | 218 |
| May | 313 | 151 | 173 | 90 | 226 | 180 | 123 | 103 | 212 |
| June | 431 | 179 | 268 | 126 | 257 | 194 | 137 | 145 | 282 |
| July | 413 | 272 | 315 | 116 | 270 | 163 | 134 | 132 | 308 |
| August | 459 | 254 | 316 | 114 | 256 | 173 | 163 | 139 | 318 |
| September | 383 | 243 | 318 | 105 | 204 | 160 | 143 | 137 | 283 |
| October | 368 | 224 | 324 | 98 | 247 | 156 | 144 | 118 | 276 |
| November | r354 | 223 | 338 | 95 | 296 | 152 | 143 | 118 | r277 |
| December | r340 | 214 | 337 | 93 | 299 | 118 | 158 | 112 | r269 |
| 1989— | | | | | | | | | |
| January | 341 | 213 | 326 | 94 | 295 | 122 | 164 | 116 | 267 |

(a) See paragraph 4 of the Explanatory Notes.

TABLE 6. INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES ENDING IN THE 12 MONTHS TO JANUARY 1989 :
AUSTRALIA, CAUSE, DURATION AND METHOD OF SETTLEMENT

| | <i>Number of disputes (a)</i> | <i>Employees involved (directly and indirectly)</i> ('000) | <i>Working days lost</i> ('000) |
|---|-------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|
| CAUSE OF DISPUTE | | | |
| Wages | 273 | 437.6 | 512.8 |
| Hours of work | 23 | 18.4 | 31.5 |
| Leave, pensions, compensation | 74 | 20.2 | 52.0 |
| Managerial policy | 591 | 311.9 | 895.0 |
| Physical working conditions | 326 | 68.8 | 153.9 |
| Trade unionism | 187 | 24.1 | 35.8 |
| Other(a) | 44 | 34.0 | 34.6 |
| Total | 1,518 | 915.1 | 1,715.7 |
| DURATION OF DISPUTE | | | |
| Up to and including 1 day | 954 | 745.4 | 737.2 |
| Over 1 to 2 days | 195 | 52.0 | 113.2 |
| Over 2 and less than 5 days | 164 | 36.6 | 146.8 |
| 5 and less than 10 days | 141 | 69.1 | 544.5 |
| 10 and less than 20 days | 51 | 10.3 | 125.4 |
| 20 days and over | 13 | 1.7 | 48.6 |
| Total | 1,518 | 915.1 | 1,715.7 |
| METHOD OF SETTLEMENT | | | |
| Negotiation | 304 | 120.5 | 190.8 |
| State legislation | 149 | 32.9 | 100.9 |
| Federal and joint Federal-State legislation | 195 | 246.6 | 779.8 |
| Resumption without negotiation | 841 | 509.1 | 595.1 |
| Other methods | 29 | 5.9 | 49.1 |
| Total | 1,518 | 915.1 | 1,715.7 |

(a) Includes disputes not elsewhere categorised.

GLOSSARY

Cause of dispute

1. The statistics of causes of industrial disputes relate to the main cause of the stoppage of work and not necessarily all causes that may have been responsible for the stoppage of work. For these reasons, the statistics do not reflect the relative importance of all causes of disputes between employers and employees. The causes are classified from information supplied by employers and according to standards determined by the International Labour Organisation. The classification of causes is as follows:

Wages. Claims involving general principles relating to wages e.g. increase (decrease) in wages; variation in method of payment or combined claims relating to wages, hours or conditions of work in which the claim about wages is deemed to be the most important. Combined claims in which other claims are deemed to be the most important are included under the relevant cause.

Hours of work. Claims involving general principles relating to hours of work e.g. decrease (increase) in hours; distribution of hours.

Leave, pensions, compensation. Claims involving general principles relating to holiday and leave provisions; pension and retirement provisions; workers' compensation provisions; insertion of penal clause provisions in awards.

Managerial policy. Disputes concerning the managerial policy of employers e.g. computation of wages, hours, leave, etc. in individual cases; docking pay, docking leave credits, fines; disciplinary matters including dismissals, suspension; alleged victimisation of union members or officials; principles of promotion and filling positions, transfers, roster complaints, retrenchment policy; employment of particular persons and personal disagreements; production limitations or quotas.

Physical working conditions. Disputes concerning physical working conditions and safety issues e.g. protective clothing and equipment; first aid services; uncomfortable working conditions; lack of, or the conditions of, amenities; claims for assistance; shortage or poor distribution of equipment or material; condition of equipment; new production methods and equipment; arduous physical tasks.

Trade unionism. Disputes concerning employment of non-unionists, inter-union and intra-union disputes; sympathy stoppages in support of employees in another industry; recognition of union activities.

Other. Disputes concerning protests directed against persons or situations other than those relating to the employer/employee relationship e.g. political matters; fining and gaoling of persons; lack of work; lack of adequate transport; non-award public holidays; accidents and attendance at funerals. Stoppages for which no reason is given are also included in this category.

Disputes

2. For these statistics, an *industrial dispute* is defined as a withdrawal from work by a group of employees, or a refusal by an employer or a number of employers to per-

mit some or all of their employees to work, each withdrawal or refusal being made in order to enforce a demand, to resist a demand, or to express a grievance.

3. A dispute affecting several establishments has been counted as a single dispute if it is organised or directed by one person or organisation; otherwise it is counted as a separate dispute at each establishment and in each industry in which it occurred. Prior to December 1987 disputes were counted differently (refer to paragraph 5 of the Explanatory Notes for other details).

4. When there is a return to work between stoppages over the same issue, and the return to work is for less than two complete calendar months, the dispute is deemed continuing. When the return to work is for two or more calendar months, the dispute is considered to have ended at the time of the return to work. Should a subsequent stoppage occur, it is counted as a new dispute.

Duration of dispute

5. The *duration* of a dispute is the average number of working days lost per employee involved in the dispute. The duration of the dispute is calculated by dividing the total number of working days lost in the dispute by the number of employees involved (both directly and indirectly).

Employees

6. *Employees* refer to wage and salary earners only. Excluded are persons who are self-employed (e.g. building sub-contractors, owner-drivers of trucks) and employers.

7. *Employees directly involved* are those who actually participated in the dispute in order to enforce or resist a demand or to express a grievance.

8. *Employees indirectly involved* are those who ceased work at the establishment where the stoppages occurred, but who are not themselves parties to the dispute. Employees who ceased work at establishments other than those where the stoppages occurred are excluded. See paragraph 2 of the Explanatory Notes.

9. *Total employees involved* for any period of time are obtained by adding together the number of employees involved in each dispute in the period. For any period of time the figures may include details of the same employees involved in more than one dispute. The longer the period of reference, the more chance there is of some double counting in the number of employees involved. Where there are varying numbers of employees involved during the progress of a dispute, the figures of employees involved included in the statistics relate to the largest number of individual employees involved on any one day. Generally, the *total* number of employees involved for each year will equal the sum of the total number of employees involved in the first month of a year plus the number of employees *newly* involved in subsequent months. Differences between monthly and annual totals can occur due to the temporary cessation of stoppages which resume in subsequent months. Employees re-involved in this type of dispute are not classified as

employees *newly* involved in stoppages in the second period in which the dispute occurs.

Method of settlement

10. Statistics of the *method of settlement* of industrial disputes relate to the *method directly responsible for ending the stoppage of work* and not necessarily to the method (or methods) responsible for settling all matters in dispute. For these reasons, they do not reflect the relative importance of the work of various industrial tribunals operating under State and Federal legislation. The classification of method of settlement is as follows:

Negotiation. Private negotiation between the parties involved, or their representatives, without the intervention or assistance of authorities constituted under State or Federal industrial legislation.

State legislation. Intervention or assistance of an industrial authority or authorities created by or constituted under State conciliation and arbitration or wages board legislation, or reference to such authorities or compulsory or voluntary conference. Intervention, assistance or advice of State government officials or inspectors.

Federal and joint Federal-State legislation. Compulsory or voluntary conference or by intervention or assistance, of, or reference to, the industrial tribunals created by or constituted under the Conciliation and Arbitration Act, Coal Industry Acts, Stevedoring Industry Act, and other acts such as the Navigation Act; Public Service Arbitra-

tion Act. Intervention, assistance or advice of Federal government officials or inspectors.

Resumption without negotiation. This category may include some disputes which are settled subject to negotiation of a formal nature, such as industrial court hearings. Stop-work meetings are included, and this category may also include disputes settled by 'resumption' as stated, but about which no further information is available.

Other methods. Mediation; filling places of employees on strike or locked out; closing establishments permanently; dismissal of employees.

Working days lost

11. *Working days lost* refer to working days lost by employees directly and indirectly involved in the dispute and figures are generally as reported by parties to the dispute. For some disputes working days lost are estimated on the basis of the number of employees involved and the duration of the dispute.

Working days lost per thousand employees

12. *Working days lost per thousand employees* are calculated from working days lost and estimates of employees obtained from the ABS Survey of Employment and Earnings and the ABS Labour Force Survey. Refer to paragraph 4 of the Explanatory Notes for details of the break in series.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

Introduction

1. The statistics in this publication relate to disputes which involved stoppages of work of ten working days or more at the establishments where the stoppages occurred. Ten working days is equivalent to the amount of ordinary time worked by ten people in one day.

2. The statistics of working days lost relate to the losses due to industrial disputes only (as defined in paragraph 2 of the Glossary). Effects on other establishments, such as stand-downs because of lack of materials, disruption of transport services, power cuts, etc. are not included.

3. The statistics of industrial disputes are compiled mainly from data obtained from employers (both private and public sector), from trade unions and from reports of government authorities. Particulars of some stoppages may have been estimated and the statistics therefore should be regarded as giving only a broad measure of the extent of industrial disputes as defined above.

Change in methodology

4. The basis for the calculation of working days lost per thousand employees was changed in January 1987 to include estimates of employees from the Survey of Employment and Earnings. They are combined with estimates of the number of employees in agriculture and in private households, obtained from the Labour Force Survey. Estimates have been recalculated on this basis for each month back to June 1984 and are available on request. In issues of this publication prior to January 1987, the estimates of numbers of employees were based entirely on Labour Force Survey data. The effect of the change is minimal at the 'all industries' level but is quite significant, in some cases, for individual industry groups.

5. The basis for the calculation of the number of disputes was changed in December 1987 (see paragraph 2 of the Glossary). Before that date, where the causes of several disputes were the same (e.g. National Wage Case disputes) the disputes were counted as one dispute, irrespective of whether they were directed or organised by one person or organisation, or whether the dispute occurred in more than one industry. The reason for the change was to align the method of counting the number of disputes with the International Labour Organisation guidelines. In accordance with this change in definition, estimates of the number of disputes shown in this bulletin for past periods have been revised. In issues of this publication prior to September 1988, the number of disputes were counted on the old basis. Unpublished estimates of the number of disputes have been revised on the new basis from January 1985 and are available on request. The number of employees involved and working days lost remain unchanged.

Reliability of estimates

6. Inaccuracies may occur because of imperfections in information provided by respondents or in processing by the ABS. Inaccuracies of this kind are referred to as non-sampling errors. Although considerable care is taken in questionnaire design; in the instructions given to employers; and in editing the returns; these inaccuracies may occur in any enumeration, whether it be a full count or a sample.

Other ABS publications

7. Users may also wish to refer to the following publications:

Industrial Disputes, Australia, (6322.0)—issued annually

Labour Statistics, Australia, (6101.0)—issued annually

The Labour Force, Australia, Preliminary (6202.0)—issued monthly

The Labour Force, Australia (6203.0)—issued monthly

Trade Union Statistics, Australia, (6323.0)—issued annually

Trade Union Members, Australia, August 1986 (6325.0)

Employed Wage and Salary Earners, Australia (6248.0)—issued quarterly

Award Rates of Pay Indexes, Australia (6312.0)—issued monthly

Unpublished statistics

8. In addition to the statistics included in this and related publications, the ABS may have other relevant unpublished data available. Inquiries should be made to the officer whose name appears in the *Phone Inquiries* section of the inquiries box at the front of this publication, or to Information Services in the nearest ABS office.

9. Current publications produced by the ABS are listed in the *Catalogue of Publications, Australia (1101.0)*. The ABS also issues, on Tuesdays and Fridays, a *Publications Advice (1105.0)* which lists publications to be released in the next few days. The Catalogue and Publications Advice are available from any ABS office.

Symbols and other usages

r estimates revised since last issue
— nil or rounded to zero

10. Where estimates have been rounded, discrepancies may occur between sums of the component items and totals.

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